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IDEA 0332

Copy 4 of 5

8 JUN 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Chief, DPD

SUBJECT: Conversion of U-2 Aircraft to U-2C

1. This memorandum contains a recommendation for the approval of the Acting Chief, DPD. Such recommendation is contained in paragraph 7.

2. The IDEALIST inventory has been reduced to eight aircraft through transfer and attrition. Upon completion of the pending conversion of one aircraft this Agency will possess four aircraft configured with a J-75 engine. These aircraft represent the total U. S. Government first line reconnaissance vehicles at the present time. Although it is recognized that certain limitations exist in the survivability of this aircraft it will remain the only overflight capability for at least twelve months. The remaining four aircraft configured with J-57 engines are considered to be obsolete and no longer capable of performing overflights of denied territory with the exception of such backward areas as Indonesia. Air aborts for contrails during recent operations support this position.

3. The initial requirement to modernize the overflight reconnaissance inventory will be to convert to a total of five aircraft configured with J-75 engines and obtain the necessary parts for two additional aircraft for an over-all planning of seven aircraft equipped with J-75 engines. Approval of this program would provide the ability to maintain a fully operational detachment in three separate areas with a spare aircraft for repair or IRAN schedule. Standardization of the aircraft will allow rotation through the various units to maintain fully operational status in each deployed detachment and a constant IRAN program.

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4. Conversion of all aircraft to J-75 engines will require extensive modification to System VII if this capability is desired. System VII is presently non-operational and will require major rework to become operational in any aircraft. In addition, IDEALIST aircraft will lose the capability to operate with weather package #2. A separate memorandum was forwarded on 6 June recommending deletion of weather package #2 from the IDEALIST inventory. (IDEA 0315)

5. A complete study of IDEALIST assets versus operational requirements, including associated special equipment, is in process and will be forwarded by separate memorandum.

6. If approved this memorandum will become the basis for an Activities Program.

7. It is recommended that a total of five aircraft configured with J-75 engines and complete IRAN be established as an immediate requirement. Further, recommend that in the same contract sufficient spare parts, necessary for converting two additional aircraft, be obtained.

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SIGNED

[Redacted Signature]

Chief, Special Projects Branch, DPD

CONCUR:

SIGNED

Chief, Materiel Staff, DPD

The recommendations contained in paragraph 7. are approved:

(Signed) Stanley W. Beerli

9 JUN 1961

STANLEY W. BEERLI
Colonel USAF
Acting Chief, DPD-DD/P

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